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Summary

Lilly (née Cohnreich) **Heidelberger** b. January 29, 1925 Berlin; parents-Arthur (lawyer) & Anna, older brother (Gunther – “George” in US), grandparents; family roots in Germany (back to 1700's-Prussia & Pomerania); Lilly, 3 yrs. old when father dies (ear infection), mother dies 4 yrs. later; raised by maternal grandfather (Prussian, doctor/dermatologist & urologist, ran practice in home); also raised by Fraulein Turner (housekeeper) & paternal aunt & uncle (doctor); heute German spoken in home; uncle first to immigrate to US; Lilly attends Franciscan convent school; vacations around Europe; discussion re: relative of small German community who experienced anti-Semitism as early as 1933-Lilly did not experience it as young girl; grandfather served in Medical Corp (WW1), felt safe in pre-war Germany; Nov 1938 Lilly's recollection of walking to school, smelling smoke (synagogues burning), told after arrival to convent that she and 6-7 other Jewish children "could no longer attend school"; family began shopping for clothes "that were made to look old," to become eligible for Kindertransport out of Berlin, grandfather also paid for another child unable to afford it; kindness of the Dutch in meeting children with food (Dutch train stop en route to England); arrival Dec 1, placed for 2 weeks in a summer camp; transfer to Church of England boarding school; close friendship with roommate Ruth; WW2 breaks out; 2-week visit from Fraulein Turner who smuggled items to Lilly; first visit to London, staying at YWCA; bombings, children evacuated from school; Lilly & Ruth placed in a caring Christian woman's home; Lilly acquires job in a dairy; brother flees Germany 1940, arrives first to Sweden then America; happiness immigrating to America (came on ship with roommate Ruth, "food was wonderful"), arrival to Chicago, first living in YWCA; finding work as librarian cataloger in spite of having no high school degree; meeting future husband (from Germany-his parents had died at Auschwitz); husband's refusal to visit Germany ever again; recollection of grandfather's tears when his medical practice was taken away (grandfather killed at Theresienstadt); two daughters Karen b.1950, Cheryl b.1954; Lilly's synagogue; best friend Ruth had moved next door, later passes away; daughter joins Anna in interview, shares parents' reluctance to share with their children what they had endured; discussion on Lilly's daughter Cheryl visiting father's hometown in Germany & finding mother's parents' graves in Berlin; Karen reads an account from her son's visit to Treblinka, titled "The Headstone From My Past"; Lilly shares an original painting of her parents & family, other family photographs, postcards from war.